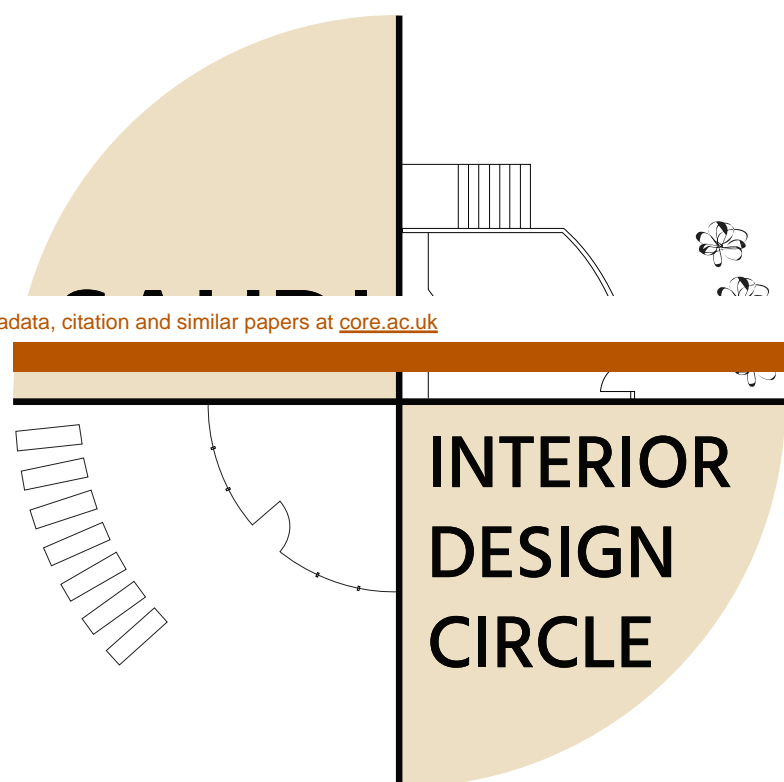


SAUDI INTERIOR DESIGN CIRCLE

A Complete Model to Start a Community for Interior Designers in Saudi Arabia

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WHAT

THE purpose of this thesis is to find out the best solution to join students, educators, professionals, and suppliers in the interior design field as well as to increase the perceived value of interior design in Saudi Arabia. Interior designers need a place where they seek positive development, facilitate learning, and to engage in a qualified community to enhance the value of interior design at a national level.

There is a noteworthy increase in the number of individuals who study, teach, or practice interior design in **Saudi Arabia**, whereas they lack support in education, resources, and connections. Moreover, the public lacks the real meaning of interior design and the importance of this profession. Interior designers need support in education, professional relation, resource utilization, and creativity improvement.

WHY

THE formation of this **website** provides a competitive advantage across the triple bottom line: social, environmental, and financial to link design, innovation, technology, management, and customers, which represent the main purpose of Design Management.

Social Measurements:

The website shows social responsibility by having: 1) An educational part to educate the public and freshman interior design students through defining the field, presenting interior design in classroom, exhibiting interior design in workplace, and validating the value of this field. 2) A job listing browsing window is available in the website to assist employment. In this window, companies can post available jobs and internship with job description for students and interior designers to seek opportunities. 3) A suppliers' directory and a designers' search engine that provides great benefits to individuals, organizations, and society. 3) Charitable contributions through donations and humanitarian programs. Donations done through the website can be cash assistance or in-kind assistance to be directed to people in need. For the humanitarian programs, the website will help to promote programs that cares about community service and improving slums in Saudi Arabia.

Environmental Measurements:

The creation of this website will be responsible towards the environment by: 1) Choosing an environmentally friendly web hosting where servers are directly powered by renewable energy, and green hosting helps to offset the website carbon usage. 2) Offering tips and services that care about the environment. Through the power of information, the website can encourage green lifestyle changes. The website will comprise some tips and guides for green building to encourage users to take a step to decrease the environmental impact. In addition, the website will offer a recycling program. It will inspire members that a second hand does not mean a second best. This program is about donating old furniture, appliances, lighting fixtures, or other home parts to be distributed to the people in need. 3) Offering eco-incentives to new subscribers who pay a monthly fee to stimulate them to join the website. This could happen by planting a tree for each subscriber either in Saudi Arabia, United States of Emirates, or Africa.

Financial Measurements:

This website is aiming to generate profit through advertisement, routing directory, and events. Selling advertisements is number one profit to gain money in a digital world. Also, the routing directory provides information in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia about available suppliers, interior design services, and jobs. So, for every one who wants his/her name to appear in the website will pay a monthly-base fee. Finally, selling sponsorships is the most popular method event holders rely on to generate additional income from their events.

HOW

Following the **Design Thinking** approach, this thesis will be able to create positive impact and to address new relevant solutions. Design Thinking is a human-centered, collaborative, and a structured approach that encompasses five major phases: empathy, define, ideate, prototype, and test.

Empathy is understanding the way users do things and why, their physical and emotional needs, how they think about the world, and what is meaningful to them. The research of this thesis involved watching, listening, and interviewing students, educators, and professionals in the interior design field. This happened through face-to-face dialogs, phone call discussions, surveys, and direct emails. Empathizing helped to understand targeted users' obstacles and challenges.

Define is about framing the action to put together a significant and functional problem statement. The research has found that the number of interior designers in Saudi Arabia is growing, whereas they do not have a place to share knowledge and experiences. Also, the research discovered lack of interior design resources, absence of mentoring programs for new interior design students, designers' struggle to finding related events, minimal gatherings to exchange benefits, transportation difficulties for women, nonexistence of informative databases, and in-apprehensible value of interior design. So, thinking about these problems and many others, it is obvious that these talented people need to be part of a synergistic group to help further overcome their obstacles and to achieve their goals.

Ideate is the combination between understanding the problem space, people involved, and designer's imagination to create solution concepts. Many ideas were discovered while brainstorming in this phase, however the best working idea is the one that helps to join education, resources, and networking in one place. Since we are in a technological revolution and everyone is using the Internet daily, creating a digital platform "website" is a convenient solution. This website will work as a hub to help foster education, integrate resources, and evolve professional connections. This website is important to assist in starting a community for interior designers. It will advocate for a better understanding of the value of design and the real meaning of Interior Design. The establishment of this website will help inspire designers and the public.

Prototype is transforming ideas and concepts to anything a user can interact with or experience. The prototype of this thesis will be building an interior design community-based website using WordPress (Content Management System). The website will be designed to be longer in length when scrolling through the page. The homepage will emphasize on three main features: about, join, and contact to quickly engage visitors and to get the website key message across.

Test is the second opportunity to gain empathy and learn more about the solution and user. After the completion of this thesis and the development of the website, it can begin to measure its impact. First, this thesis will consider the people involved by revisiting the initial interviewee audience. Additionally, tracking what happens through actively engaging with people, counting numbers, and relying on secondary data. This paper will observe and take notes on the impact over time to refine the solution to make it better.